

Picatinny School News

Top Three Ways To Communicate With Your Child

By: Danielle Hollister

Although many parents become frustrated as they try to maintain an open line of communication between themselves and their children, regardless of age, there are three quite simple ways to attempt to achieve this goal effectively.

1. Talk to your kids. Every day. More than once a day. Every morning before school. Every afternoon after school. Every evening (preferably as you sit down TOGETHER at the dinner table.) Every night before they go to bed (preferably as you ARE THE PERSON who tucks them in, says goodnight, sees them get in bed in their pajamas etc...)
2. Make time for your children. Not just the above mentioned time to talk - but actual time WITH them. Go to their soccer games, school events, and other extracurricular activities. And DO NOT just show up at their games half-way through and leave before they end. Talk to them (and their friends on the way back). Stay for the whole game, talk to your children after the game is over about the game, their friends, their coaches, the involved people....
3. Be honest with your kids. Children can spot a liar a mile away. They relate and respond to HONESTY. They rely on you to tell them the truth. If you do not deliver this

basic necessity, how can you expect them to reciprocate? If you HAVE to work late and will not be able to attend their game, be at dinner, help them with their homework etc...TELL THEM WHY you have to work late.

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Don't Forget!

Check out the website www.Tutor.com/military for homework help! At Tutor.com, you get a professional online tutor whenever you need help. You work one-to-one with your tutor in our online classroom on your specific homework problem until it's done. This is a **FREE** service to military family members!

Ways to Nurture Ambition in Children

Encourage them -- Someone has to be President. If your child wants to do something remarkable, don't rubbish the idea. Encourage them to work out how they could make it happen.

Challenge them -- Wrapping your child in protective blankets will only make the world seem more frightening than it really is. Set them challenges that will stretch them. Celebrate the successes with them.

See the world -- Give your children opportunities to see new things, new places, and meet new people. No one changed the world by staying at home. Take them traveling.

Buy books -- Okay, so it's natural for an author to recommend buying books. Reading broadens the mind and inspires ambition; buy books.

Encourage heroes -- There's nothing wrong with hero worship, in fact it's a brilliant way

to focus ambition. Encourage children to find out how their heroes did what they did and how it all started.

Role play -- Creative play develops creative thinking. Children do this instinctively, but encourage them and suggest scenarios for exploration.

Group play -- Children grow up to be more confident if they regularly play with other children. They also learn how to influence others.

Ways Families Can Stay Connected During Deployment

Helpful Math Resources

MATHMOVESU-
(www.mathmovesu.com)

Raytheon created this site for middle school students. It is a virtual world combining math, music, fashion, and sports. Hands-on worksheets allow for deep exploration of interesting topics. The site includes homework tips for parents and family math challenge ideas so parents can join in on the learning.

ASK DR. MATH-
(<http://mathforum.org/dr.math>)

Parents and students needing assistance with a homework problem or a new concept can check out Ask Dr. Math. The FAQ covers numerous topics and contains a robust search engine to help families locate the information they are searching for. If what is needed is not found in those resources, the particular question can be addressed through the web forum. Volunteer mathematicians worldwide answer questions. The math content ranges from elementary school through college level.

If you have a family member who is frequently deployed, bonding moments are even more important. Here are ways to make sure everyone stays in touch.

The time before, during, and after deployment is often filled with anxiety and confusion. The number of family members of active duty military personnel is approximately 2 million, which includes spouses, children and adult dependents. Coping with both the physical and emotional distance, while keeping family bonds intact, can feel challenging. But by keeping one another in their daily thoughts and rituals, family members can stay connected over space and time. Here are nine ways to maintain strong bonds while a family member is deployed.

Plan For Overseas Communication

The surge in technological advancement has given families multiple ways to connect. "Bringing a laptop and a phone that will work internationally are great ways to prepare, and researching what will work overseas (with the guidance of a nearby military base) is a good idea," says Elizabeth Ehrhardt, L.I.C.S.W., a clinical social worker with military families.

Valerie Clark, a licensed professional counselor and mother of two whose husband has been deployed several times, agrees: "The fact that we could Skype during the last deployment was a game-

changer. It was something that we could look forward to. The kids could actually see their dad, see that he was okay, and talk to him." As exciting as technology is, though, it can also be unreliable and lead to disappointment. And frustration when there is signal trouble or a deployed parent is unavailable. "When it was bad, there were lots of tears," Clark reveals. Always have a backup plan to do something fun together if, for reasons beyond anyone's control, the communication gets disrupted.

Work Together as Parents

Make sure family time includes time for both parents to check in with one another and be on the same page.

"Communication is key," says Kathleen Mulrooney, Senior Training and Consultation Specialist with military family projects at Zero to Three, a nonprofit that focuses on the health and development of infants and toddlers. "For families who have good communication and planning—before deployment and while a parent is away—things are much less stressful." For Clark and her husband, issues included when to tell the kids he was leaving and how to manage the anxiety around departure dates, and how much television news to expose them to. If you make sure both parents are discussing family matters and handling them consistently, the bond will continue to stay strong.

Set the Schedule

Children thrive on routine. Keep the days structured to help anchor kids and plan events to get excited about. "If you don't have something to look forward to, it just makes the clock tick," Clark says. "I would plan things every week or two." Road trips, outings, and visiting friends were all on Clark's event calendar. Get together with other military families and have family slumber parties. Just make sure the schedule includes regular quality time together with the kids. "Be available on a regular basis to catch up on whatever is on their minds," Mulrooney advises. "Going for a walk together or just sitting on a blanket in the living room and having pizza or ice cream can be fun and different." Reading stories is another great way to connect. Books like *Mama, Do You Love Me?* By Barbara M. Joosse and Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst can give insight into a kid's emotional life and reassure them that it's okay to have feelings of sadness sometimes.

Personalize Mementos

Spend time creating special tokens for one another before deployment. A parent can record a favorite bedtime story on a recordable children's book or on a digital recorder, video camera, or other device. "For some kids I've worked with," says Ehrhardt, "saying good night to Daddy and pressing the

What's Happening in the Schools this Month

Dennis B. O'Brien

5/1 -PTA Meeting
 5/5-9-NJASK (5th grade)
 5/8-9- Plant Sale
 5/12-16- NJASK (grade3&4)
 5/16—Jump rope for Heart
 5/22- Delayed Opening
 Spring Concert/Art Exhibit
 5/26- No School for Memorial Day
 5/27-29 Spring BOGO Book Fair
 5/30-Field Day Rain

Copeland Middle School

5/1- 6th-7th HS Parent Info Night
 5/5-8 NJ ASK (Grade 6,7&8)
 5/5- PTA Meeting 7pm
 5/22-Delayed Opening
 9:40am
 5/26- School Closed for Memorial Day

Morris Knolls H.S.

5/1- 7:30 pm NHS Induction Ceremony
 5/3 -SAT Tests
 5/5-16- AP Exams
 5/8—World Lang Induction Ceremony
 5/14—HAS Meeting 7pm
 5/16- Junior Prom at The Skylands
 5/19-20 - 8am Senior Portraits
 5/21- Spring Band Concert
 5/20-22- Biology E.O.C.Exam
 5/26- School Closed for Memorial Day
 5/30- Senior Field Day

Ways Families Can Stay Connected During Deployment (continued)

Button to hear his voice was part of the bedtime routine.” Recordable picture frames are also excellent options because messages like “I love you” or “I miss you” can accompany a favorite photograph.

Or trace a parent's hand and make it into a magnet on the fridge so a child can high-five it whenever something positive happens, Mulroney suggests. Transitional objects such as picture quilts and laminated wallet-size photos can also be easily transported wherever a parent or child goes, she says. Even a pillow case or blanket that Daddy or Mommy used to sleep on can create a sensory connection. The smell, the sound of a familiar voice, or a recognizable smile can create a comfort-

ing sense of a loved one.

Reach Out

“When your spouse is gone, people need to remember it's okay to ask for help,” Clark advises. “Be proactive. Not everyone knows, but when you tell people ‘this is what I need,’ they help.” Those needs may include finding child care, juggling chores, or getting emotional support. Make sure to voice any concerns or difficult feelings. Clark made it a point to reach out to other military spouses, often having them over for dinner. “When there are other people around that are going through a similar situation, it's nice to have camaraderie.”

Take Care of You

The parent who remains at home is, in many ways, doing the job of a single

parent. It's impossible to be available and supportive of everyone else unless you take time to replenish. “Make sure that the parent who's home is staying connected with other friends, families, and peers,” Mulroney says. Social support is important, as is time alone, she explains: “Do something special just for you.” Engage in simple activities like flipping through a magazine, going for a walk, or seeing a movie with friends. “Exercise was my personal freedom,” Clark reveals. Set aside personal time in your busy schedule to restore your energy.

The bottom line is even if your kids resist changes, work to keep everyone close and on the same page.

More Math Resources

KHAN ACADEMY-

(www.khanacademy.org)

Khan Academy is a not-for-profit site with over 1200 YouTube videos covering everything from basic arithmetic and algebra to differential equations, physics, chemistry, biology, and finance, recorded by Salman Khan. He says, “I teach the way I wish I was taught. The concepts are conveyed as they are understood by me, not as they are written in a textbook developed by an educational bureaucracy. Viewers know that is the labor of love of one somewhat quirky and determined man who has a passion for learning and teaching.”

MATHCOUNTS-

(<https://mathcounts.org>)

MATHCOUNTS is a national math enrichment program concentrating on middle school math. The program sponsors a nationwide competition. The program also helps support math clubs. The site also features problems of the week for summertime math activities or extra practice.



The School Liaison Officer works in conjunction with the Child and Youth Services Division and the local school community to address educational issues involving military children. Through partnering with the local and military community, the School Liaison Officer acts as a communication link between the installation and the surrounding school districts.

For more information, contact your School Liaison Officer.

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What is complementary learning?

Learn more at www.hfrp.org

Educators, policymakers, and families increasingly agree: schools cannot do it alone. Children need multiple opportunities to learn and grow—at home, in school, and in the community. Complementary learning is a comprehensive strategy for addressing all of these needs and ensuring success for all children and youth. Complementary learning is the idea that a systemic approach - which intentionally integrates both school and nonschool supports - can better ensure that all children have the skills they need to succeed.

What does complementary learning look like?

A complementary learning approach provides and aligns these beneficial opportunities: effective schools, supportive families and opportunities for

family engagement, early childhood programs, health and social services, out-of-school time activities (including sports, arts, and mentoring programs), community-based and cultural institutions and colleges and universities.

What's different about complementary learning?

Traditional programs isolate services in separate silos. In contrast, complementary learning systems assure learning supports are intentionally connected. They: align resources to maximize efficiency, create a web of opportunity so that no child falls through cracks, provide disadvantaged children enriching opportunities that are the norm for middle class children, promote success from birth through adolescence so that all children are ready to enter school and ready to exit.

CYSS School Age Services

The Picatinny School Aged Services is located in building 3156 and provides quality child care for children before and after school. The program is available from September through June. It includes indoor activities such as science, arts and crafts, a Homework Center and Computer Lab. The program also provides services during school holidays and teacher in-service days in accordance with the Rockaway Twp school calendar. Children attending the Rockaway Twp Schools are bused to and from the program. Hours of operation for the before and after school programs and the summer camp program are 0700-1730 daily.